4/8/70

Mr. Lou M. Nitz, Manager
Radio Station WGN
75 East Wacker Drive
Chicago Ill.

Dear Mr. Nitz,

The Associated Press account of the filing of the so-called "law suit" against the National Archives by Sherman Skolnick says you "worked with Skolnick in its preparation". It is possible you are as much the victim of a run-amok ego as I, therefore I write you immediately.

This is an entirely frivolous suit, the sole apparent purpose of which seems to be to publicize Skolnick. Because I may have to carry this further and have every intention of so doing if it is necessary, I give you only a few details.

This is an open, deliberate, knowing plagiarism of my work, including the documents. Skolnick, who obtained it from a friend who had helped me in some areas, knew it was embodied in a book. He may have thought my rights were vested in common law only. However, it is copyrighted, as I will be glad to show you.

He has been trading on my name widely, pretending to people ranging from lawyers to reporters that he is my close buddy, telling them and others he had an appointment to see me this past weekend, etc., whereas he has never been in touch with me and even failed to offer I complained of his earlier plagiarism on MLK.

As of yesterday, he had never made any request of the National Archives. To make you see ridiculous, on the face of it, this spurious litigation is, those FBI reports he stole from me came from the National Archives. The rest of the material he says he seeks, and having never asked for it is a cunning way of seeking it, is not in the Archives and has never been there. It breaks into two kinds, the part he stole, which is in the Archives, where I got it, and the part that, if it exists, is not and never was in the Archives. The first part relates to Vallee. My own investigation established, on highest authority, that the Secret Service never gave any material on Vallee to the Archives for reasons it considered reasonable and I think you will find almost any court will agree with. Now, then, can the Archives be the agency filed against? There is one document on Vallee still withheld at the Archives, but in this case the withholding is required of it by the agency of origin under law and regulation that is not new and not unreasonable.

How does it strike you, how do you think the court will regard a case charging suppression when there has never been any requests for what is alleged to be suppressed and when attachments to the complaint come from the alleged suppression?

Furthermore, you should know there are certain prerequisites to the invocation of the Freedom of Information law, not one of which has been met or even attempted. When this suit is unceremoniously tossed out of court for its obvious deficiencies, what do you think the effect will be upon the search for truth and on those of us who have labored so long, at such great personal cost and sacrifice?

Skolnick has a penchant for calling others government "agents". Is it possible to act more in the interest of those who are responsible for the actual, existing suppressions, of which Skolnick has no knowledge and has made no effort to overcome, than by filing spurious, invalid suits the net result of which will be to accredit those responsible for these suppressions?

The same AP story says you aired all of this prior to filing the suit. I therefore ask for a tape, at any speed as slow as 1 7/8, of this tape. After hearing it I will be glad to discuss it with you. I also ask for a xerox copy of the suit, especially of the papers filed. I have little doubt I will be able to show you sufficient in identification to establish xxx that Skolnick, after obtaining these documents without my permission (and they are part of the book), didn't even bother to duplicate my work but used copies of the identical documents. I am confident in some cases sufficient marks of identification will be preserved.

While I have no doubt at all that with no help whatsoever I can establish this as blatant thievery and more, in fairness to you and others at Metromedia who have befriended me in the past, I tell you I have statements from a number of Skolnick's associates, including several who tried without success to divert him from this ego trip, and from others to whom he has spoken about this.

This damages me, my work and the prospects of my book rather severly, as I think should be obvious to you by now. However, in the redressxxx I have no interest in damaging you or those you represent. I would hope it is possible, to the extent it is possible to undo this damage, to accomplish it without needless hurt to those who may not have intended it.

If I can, I will attempt to phone you later today. Whether or not we speak, I look forward to hearing from you on this at your earliest convenience, for the longer this goes unrectified the greater the damage, inevitably, will be.

In sending me the tapes and a copy of all the papers filed in court, it will serve no purpose to use special delivery, for I live in the country. Air mail will speed it. I also hope you will include all releases you may have made, all statements of any kind, etc. and any press clippings you may have. Not only would I like them, but I think they will enable me to provide you even more assurance of the validity of the foregoing.

When we are dealing with the integrity of our society and with the institution of the Presidency, all scandals are inappropriate. I would prefer that we find it possible to handle this matter in a way that will either prevent further scandal or at least minimize that which cannot be avoided.

Sincerely,

Harold Weisberg